

printing indicia on said plastic tag blank;

overlying said indicia, once said indicia is printed on said plastic tag blank., with a thin, plastic film to form a juxtaposed pairing of said plastic tag blank and said plastic film;

applying heat to said juxtaposed pairing sufficient to weld said indicia to said plastic tag blank; and

removing said plastic film from said plastic tag blank after said applying heat.

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated 05/02/03.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.136, Applicant requests a three month extension of time to response to the action of 05/02/03, and the fee for such extension may be charged to the deposit account of the undersigned, Account No. 50-0894.

All claims stand rejected, either under Section 102 or 103, in view of Oshima, Klinefelter, and/or Minkus.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to clearly distinguish from any prior art in which a plastic overlay is affixed or laminated to a tag blank, by "welding" or otherwise. As mentioned in the earlier response, the present invention is very clearly different from anything taught in the prior art. The very focus of the cited prior art - to laminate layers onto tag blanks, is completely obviated in the present invention, and as now more clearly claimed, involves removing the overlay, or would-be "lamine" after the heating process occurs. As has always been the focus of the present invention, it is the indicia, not any laminate or film, which is "welded" to the plastic tag blank.

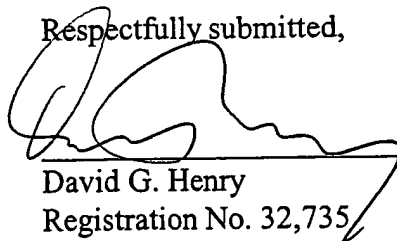
It is respectfully urged, again, that Oshima and Klinefelter are inapposite, and, accordingly, Minkus (as only an obviousness reference, linked with Klinefelter or Oshima) becomes irrelevant. The arguments for this position were given before, and need not be repeated again, particularly in view of the claim amendment.

A proposed informal drawing is submitted for Examiner's consideration. This simple drawing is merely intended to reflect that which has already been described: a printer which prints indicia onto a tag blank, a heater which applies heat to a pairing of tag blank and film overlay, and a finished tag which has been carried by the film to a finished position. If additional details are needed, applicant respectfully requests the opportunity to submit same.

In view of the above, it is submitted that Claims 1 - 8 are in a condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and objections are hereby requested. Allowance of Claims 1 - 8 at an early date is solicited.

If impediments to allowance of Claims 1 - 8 remain, and a telephone conference between the undersigned and the examiner would help remove such impediments in the opinion of the examiner, a telephone conference is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Marked Version to Show Claim Amendments

1. An improved process for imprinting plastic identification tags with durable indicia comprising the steps of:

selecting a plastic tag blank;

printing indicia on said plastic tag blank;

overlying said indicia, once said indicia is printed on ~~a printing service of said tag~~

~~blank~~ said plastic tag blank., with a thin, plastic film to form a juxtaposed

pairing of said plastic tag blank and said plastic film; ~~and~~

applying heat to said juxtaposed pairing sufficient to weld said indicia to said plastic

tag blank; and

removing said plastic film from said plastic tag blank after said applying heat.